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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY,
JANUARY 4-5, 2003

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for January 4-5, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICS, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. SOUTHEASTERN GOVERNORS CONVENE TO ASSESS
REFUGEE ISSUE

(Hurriyet) It is reported that it has been decided at the prime ministry meeting of the governors in southeastern border regions that all the precautions to be implemented in the event of an influx of tens of thousands of people from northern Iraq be coordinated by the Regional Governor, Aydin Gokhan, and that 18 sites have been selected in the region for setting up tent cities. It is also reported that the phrase "population movement" should be used instead of "immigration".

3. COOPERATION AGAINST AK PARTY IN SIIRT

(Hurriyet) CHP has rolled up its sleeves to defeat AK Party's chairman, Tayyip Erdogan, at the elections in Siirt. Angered Fadil Akgunduz supporters will reportedly work against AK Party, as they believe Akgunduz was imprisoned of embezzlement to open the path for Tayyip Erdogan to become prime minister. It is also claimed that as DYP, ANAP, MHP, and SP will not be able to produce any deputies in Siirt, they will support the CHP candidate, Dr. Ekrem Bilek, who was elected to the parliament in the November 3 general elections. Regarding the issue, Dr. Bilek said that AK Party had enjoyed 14 thousand votes, Mr. Akgunduz 11 thousand as an independent, CHP 7,500, and DEHAP, DYP, ANAP, SP 40 thousand votes, and he claimed that CHP would get around 40 thousand votes if Mr. Erdogan nominated himself from Siirt.

4. TURKEY FORMS A SECURITY BELT IN NORTHERN IRAQ

(Milliyet) Turkey is forming a security zone in the Dohuk and Zaho regions of northern Iraq, which used to teem with PKK terrorists. Turkey's objective is to eradicate any security-related problems it would encounter in the event of an influx of immigrants and terrorist infiltration. Turkey is considering a military mobilization of 60-70 kilometers inside northern Iraq in the looming war with Iraq.

5. SIX GANG MEMBERS ARRESTED IN ADANA

(Turkiye-Bolge) Adana police arrested six persons accused of forming a gang for the purposes of gaining money and carrying out killings, extortion and ransom crimes. Following the completion of their interrogations, the arrestees were taken to the State Security Court of Adana.

6. FIVE ARRESTED FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING IN VAN AND HATAY

(Turkiye) Five persons were arrested with five kilograms of heroin and 15 kilograms of morphine in Hatay and Caldiran (Van) as they were trying to sell them to the Jandarma who pretended to be buyers. In connection with heroin trafficking in Hatay, one Turkish and one Syrian nationals were ordered held. It is believed that the drugs seized in Caldiran were smuggled from Iran. Three persons have been arrested and an investigation is underway, the officials said.

7. ADANA NGO OPPOSES U.S. LED WAR ON IRAQ

(Bolge) As reactions to a possible US-led war in Iraq increased, Suleyman Ozkan, President of the

Adana chapter of the Inmates and Prisoners' Families Assistance and Solidarity Association, announced the United States wanted to drown the Middle East in blood and tears. Ozkan claimed the U.S. wanted to drag Turkey into an environment with irrecoverable losses although it had not dressed the wounds from the 1991 Gulf Crisis. Around 200 association members expressed that they were against war and asked for an end to anti-democratic practices in prisons.

18. TWO HADEP OFFICIALS ARRESTED IN DIYARBAKIR (Evrensel) A Diyarbakir court ordered two HADEP officials to remain in custody for violating the Meetings, Demonstrations and Marches Law by staging an unauthorized demonstration and shouting slogans on December 31, 2002.

19. NUMBER OF CHECK POINTS REMAINS THE SAME AFTER OHAL (Evrensel) Some of the check points closed down during the State of Emergency (OHAL) in Hakkari, Bitlis and Van provinces have been reopened on the grounds of "security and smuggling". OHAL was lifted in Van two years ago, and in Hakkari on November 30, 2002. The checkpoints are deemed impediments to freedom of travel and trade.

110. ARRESTS IN THE SOUTHEAST (Evrensel) Nusaybin (Mardin) police arrested five HADEP members, eleven high school students and one Yeniden Ozgur newspaper distributor earlier this month. The HADEP members were accused of "distributing handouts," while the students were charged with forming committees for the purpose of recruitment for the Kurdistan Youth Organization (YCK). A local court later released the students, but ordered the HADEP members and the distributor to remain in custody.

111. POLICE ARREST NINE IN GAZIANTEP DORMITORY (Radikal) Police stopped two suspects entering the State-owned Orphans' Dormitory in Gaziantep around midnight, arresting the one on whom two grams of heroin were found, while the other suspect escaped. The suspect who entered the dormitory asked for help from his friends. A group of 30 youths lit a fire on the roof of the building and threw roof tiles at the police. The group returned to their dormitories after the arrested person was released. Afterwards, the police arrested the two suspects and nine others, seizing many knives and lots of wire.

112. WIRE FENCE PUT AROUND 20-KM LINE AT BATMAN OIL REFINERY (Radikal) As military and civilian measurements are undertaken in the Southeast for a possible US-led war on Iraq, the perimeter of Tupsas Refinery in Batman was surrounded with a four-meter-high wire fence. Tankers waiting to dump fuel oil they had brought in from northern Iraq have reportedly formed a 20-kilometer-long queue at the refinery.

113. ANTI-BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL COMMITTEES FORMED (Turkiye) After determination by the Diyarbakir Governor's Office of shelters to be used by the public in the event of war on Iraq, the province's Civil Defense Directorate formed an "Anti-Biological and Chemical Struggle Committee." The committee is made up of teachers from the Science Faculty and expert doctors from the Dicle University (Diyarbakir) Hospital.

114. RELIEF MATERIALS DISPATCHED TO IRAQI BORDER (Turkiye) Eight truckloads of relief materials sent by the Turkish Red Crescent were unloaded in Silopi (Sirnak) to cope with possible infiltration of refugees in the event of war on Iraq.

115. NGOS OPPOSE WAR, URGE UN DECISION (Turkiye) It was announced by representatives of various chambers in Adana and Mersin that any war not based on legitimate grounds is a crime against humanity. Business circles in Adana, Mersin and Tarsus (Mersin) signed a joint declaration saying that "the operation on Iraq for which the United States is making preparations is not based on

legitimate grounds; all the states in the world, particularly our country, should oppose this issue unless a United Nations' decision has been obtained, and that the likely war would bring great material and moral losses to our country, especially to the Cukurova (Adana) region, and that we announce to the public opinion that our country should not take part in this war unless a United Nations' decision has been obtained".

16. INTERIOR MINISTRY BANS VILLAGE GUARDS FROM POLITICS

(Evrensel) A recently circulated Interior Ministry decree bans Hakkari village guards from becoming administrators or members of political parties. Based on the decree, 140 village guards in Cukurca (Hakkari) were summoned to the district Jandarma Command in early December and were asked to resign from their political parties; otherwise their weapons would be confiscated. This new decree has affected mostly MHP and DYP, not DEHAP.

17. FAMILY PLANNING

(Cumhuriyet) A report by the Diyarbakir Chamber of Physicians revealed that women in the Southeast have insufficient information about birth and family planning. While 61% of women do not get any pre-delivery medical care, 58% do not use any birth control methods. Fifty-four per cent of births take place at home and 0.062 of babies are stillborn, while the infant mortality rate is 0.076 per cent. The report noted that it was mandated by law to get a spouse's consent for sterilization, and that there were claims of forced birth-control methods in the region. The report emphasized that it was up to the individual to choose any birth-control methods after being informed adequately. "The OHAL Regional Governor's teams should be removed from family planning services. While these services are being rendered, modern, scientific, legal, and moral principles should not be neglected. Especially ligation of tubes (sterilization) should only be applied on a voluntary basis, not through any incentives, persuasion, or pressure," the report said.

18. ADANA'S SEYHAN DISTRICT MAYOR TO JOIN CHP (Bolge) It is claimed that Adana's Seyhan district mayor, Yildiray Arikan, who plans to run for mayor of Adana, has increased his efforts to join CHP, as his party, YTP, has very little popularity. It is alleged that he will join CHP between January 14-

17.

ECONOMIC AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

19. MALATYA HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES FIRED

(Evrensel) In the Turgut Ozal Medical Center, affiliated with Malatya's Inonu University, where a chapter of the national Health Union (Saglik-Sen) is getting organized, 122 workers were terminated, in addition to the 22 workers terminated a month ago. The terminated workers claimed that they had received warnings that they should not register with the union; otherwise, they would be terminated. They added that Rector Dr. Fatih Hilmioglu was backing the sacking of workers.

HOLTZ